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WALLOPS FLIGHT FACILITY PLAYS PART IN RETURN TO FLIGHT

As eyes look to the skies July 13, as Space Shuttle Discovery Returns to Flight, radars and other instruments at NASA's Wallops Flight Facility, Wallops Island, Va., will be poised skyward to provide critical support to the mission.

During the 13 day mission, the seven-member crew of Discovery, designated STS-114, will try out and evaluate new safety enhancements, as well as deliver supplies and equipment to the International Space Station.

Wallops radars track the shuttle, providing position data during the launch and throughout the mission. The Facility's instruments also provide a communication link between the Shuttle and mission control at the NASA Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas. In addition, Wallops tracks the position of the Station before, during and after docking with the Shuttle.

When the Shuttle returns to Earth, it will deliver a piece of science equipment that will later be processed at the Wallops Flight Facility—the Student Experiment Module (SEM) Satchel.

The SEM Satchel is a module containing experiment samples for 11 schools and organizations nation-wide. The Satchel has been onboard the Station since December 25, 2004. One of the schools with experiments on the SEM Satchel is Walkersville Christian Family School, Stockton, Md., an organization of home-schooled students.

For information about the Visitor Center on the Internet, visit

<http://www.wff.nasa.gov/vc>

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